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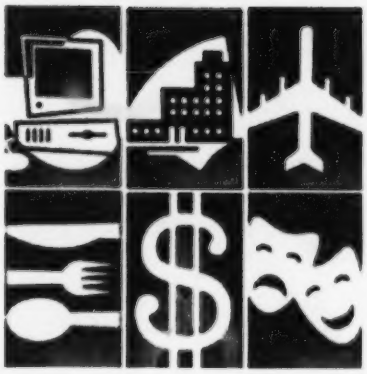
Consumer Demand for Entertainment Services Outside the Home



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Consumer Demand for Entertainment Services Outside the Home

By Yusu Guo and Don Little, Service Industries Division, Statistics Canada

Introduction

In recent years, Canadians have spent more on entertainment. For their homes, demand has risen for such goods as home entertainment systems and computers. Households are also spending more on home services such as cable television and high speed Internet access.[1]

There has concurrently been an increase in demand for entertainment outside the home. The entertainment services outside the home discussed in this article include attendance at movie theatres, performing arts and spectator sports events and admissions to heritage institutions. Expenditures on these services comprised 0.44% of the average household's overall spending budget in 2003, up from 0.41% in 1998. This shift in preferences and growth in incomes, population and prices caused the consumer market for entertainment services to expand from $2.3 billion in 1998 to $3.2 billion in 2003, an increase of 41%. Entertainment services outside the home not only entertain those that consume them, they also offer platforms for performers and bring cultural as well as natural heritage closer to Canadians.

As the entertainment services market grows, the providers of these services face the challenge of retaining existing customers and attracting new ones. Knowing how consumer characteristics such as income, type of household and geographical location affect entertainment spending can enable suppliers to better provide and market their services.

Based primarily on Survey of Household Spending (SHS) data from 1998 and 2003, this article examines changes over the five year period in household spending on entertainment services. In particular, it investigates how spending changed in each province and for some household types and each household income quintile. It also looks at how the performance of entertainment services providers may have been affected by such changes.

1. From 1998 to 2003, the average household increased its spending on Internet services by 254% and on cable services by 51%. Source: The Survey of Household Spending, 1998 and 2003.

Methodology

Most data for this article come from the 1998 and the 2003 results of the Survey of Household Spending (SHS), an annual cross sectional survey, that looks at the spending behaviour of Canadian households. The SHS defines a household as members currently residing at the same dwelling as the reference person. A household may consist of a family or group of unrelated persons or of a person living alone. Household members who are temporarily absent on the reference day are considered part of their usual household.

The SHS yields detailed information on household spending on goods and services, including food, shelter, household operations, transportation, recreation and other items. Detailed demographic information is also available for categories such as household type, age, income and geographical location.

The sample sizes for the 1998 and 2003 surveys were 20,236 and 23,896 respectively. Households from the ten provinces and three territories were covered. However, since much of the territorial data from 1998 are incomplete, the territories are excluded from this article's geographical comparisons.

Note that, because this article focuses only on "out of home entertainment services", it excludes expenditures on such things as "in-home" entertainment goods (for example, televisions, computers, etc…) and services such as the Internet, cablevision, satellite and video and DVD rentals.

The per household expenditures cited on this article also include spending outside the province of residence and even spending outside of Canada. It is also important to note that some of the industry revenue figures include revenues earned from foreigners, as well as revenues coming from sources other than households.

This article also presents statistics for the industries providing entertainment services outside the home. These results mostly come from the following Statistics Canada surveys:
--Motion Pictures Theatre Survey
--The Annual Survey of Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
--Performing Arts Survey

Spending on entertainment services highly dependent on income levels

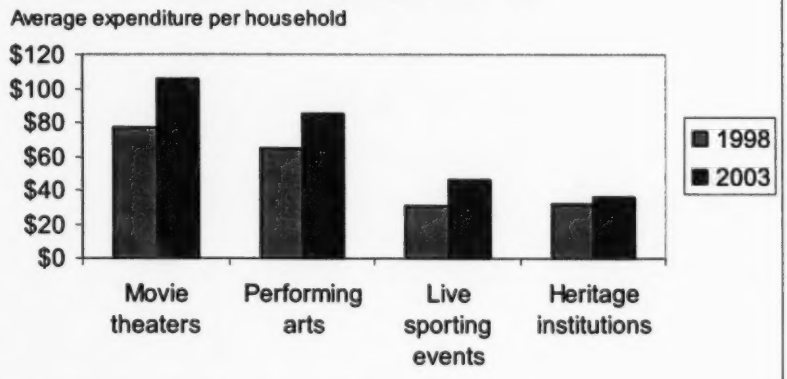
The average household spent $273[2] on entertainment services outside the home in 2003, a 31% increase from 1998[3]. This growth far exceeded the 13% increase in the all-items

2. Average spending per household calculations include all households – even those that made no expenditures on the services alluded to.

consumer price index and the 19% growth rate of household spending on all goods and services. The rapid growth for entertainment services occurred, in part, because the average household's income rose in real terms during the same period.[4] Entertainment services are discretionary commodities rather than necessities, therefore spending on these services may well increase whenever incomes rise.

Of the $273 that households spent on entertainment services, over two-thirds was spent attending movies ($106 per household) and live performing arts ($85). The remainder went to paying to see live sporting events and visiting heritage institutions, on which households spent an average of $46 and $36, respectively (Chart 1).

Chart 1. Household spending on entertainment services outside the home



In terms of growth from 1998 to 2003, spending on live sports events grew most rapidly (44%). Conversely, average household spending at heritage institutions grew at the slowest rate (13%).

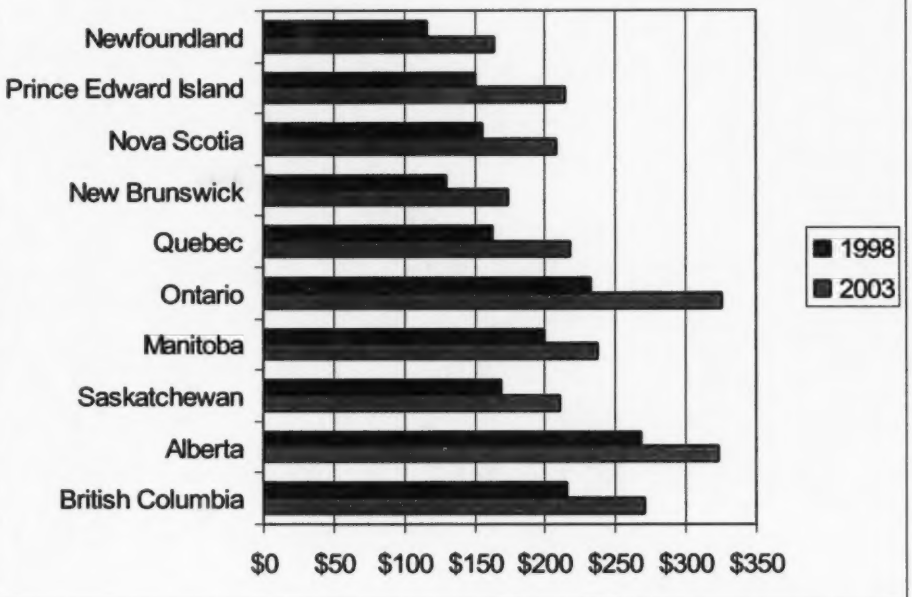
Spending on entertainment services outside the home is relatively low in the Maritime provinces, where the average household spent an average of $189. This result is not surprising as household incomes in the region are considerably below the national average.

In contrast, Ontario households, on average, spent $326 on entertainment services in 2003 - the most in Canada (Chart 2). They were followed by households in Alberta ($323), and British Columbia ($271). The fact that households in these same provinces had Canada's

3. This 31% increase falls short of the earlier-cited 41% rise in total expenditures on entertainment services by all households because the latter is affected by a 7.8% increase in the number of households from 1998 to 2003.
4. The 16.7% growth rate in the average household's before-tax income from 1998 to 2003 exceeded the 12.6% increase in the all-items consumption price index during the same period.

highest before-tax incomes further supports the contention that entertainment services spending is highly discretionary and therefore dependent on income.

Chart 2. Average household spending on entertainment services outside the home



So too does spending data for various income quintiles. On average, households in the highest income quintile[5] spent $602 in 2003 on entertainment services, more than triple the $191 average for other households. In contrast, households in the lowest income quintile spent an average of $70.

Even though households in the lowest quintile increased their entertainment services spending by 43% from 1998 to 2003 (this was highest growth rate for any quintile) they accounted for only one-twentieth of the entire consumer market for entertainment services outside the home in 2003.

Among various *types* of households, on average, couples with children spend the most ($384 in 2003) in part because these households are large and earn the highest incomes.[6] However, on a per capita basis, their expenditures are not out of the ordinary. At the

5. Households were ranked in ascending order according to their before-tax income, and then divided into five groups, or quintiles, such that the estimated number of households in each group was the same. In 2003, there were 2,349,850 households per quintile.
6. The average couple with children household contained 3.9 people and had a before-tax income of $85,418 in 2003. The corresponding averages for all households were 2.6 people and $62,183, respectively.

other end of the spectrum, one-person households aged 65 and over by far spent the least ($67). This is likely due to their relatively low incomes and the fact that these households comprise only one person. Moreover, mobility constraints can make it more difficult for some of these individuals to enjoy entertainment outside the home, and those that so do frequently benefit from seniors' discounts on prices.

From 1998 to 2003, the fastest-growing segment of the consumer market for entertainment services outside the home was lone parent households. These households accounted for $169 million in entertainment services spending in 2003, up 61% from 1998. There are two probable explanations for this rapid growth. First, incomes for these households rose relatively rapidly and, second, the number of lone parent households has risen since 1998.[7]

While incomes, province of residence and household type all affect levels of entertainment services spending, there are other factors that might also influence consumer behaviour, but which are beyond the scope of this article. For example, cultural differences and rural versus urban demand differences could also affect spending levels on entertainment services.

Increased spending and profits for movie theatres

Movie theatres earned operating revenues of $1.2 billion, largely from consumers, in 2003/04, up 47% from 1998/99[8]. Most of this increase was due to attendance growth and higher ticket prices. Ticket prices, on average, increased by 37% from 1998/99 to 2003/04 to reach $7.45. Even though ticket prices rose far more rapidly than the overall rate of inflation[9], this did not dampen consumer demand. Movie attendance rose by 8% from 1998/99 to 2003/04 to reach 118.2 million.

The average household spent $106 going to the movies in 2003. Residents of Ontario and Alberta are the most avid movie goers, spending around $120 per household. In contrast, residents of Newfoundland ($65) and Saskatchewan ($62) spent the least. In terms of growth from 1998 to 2003, household spending at movie theatres rose most rapidly in Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Ontario.

Among the income quintile groups, average per household expenditures to attend movies increased most rapidly for the two highest quintiles. By 2003, these households

7. The average before-tax income for lone parent households rose 23.4% from 1998 to 2003, while that for all households rose by 16.7%. As well, the number of lone parent households rose 4.4% during the period.
8. Movie theatres are classified under NAICS category 512130. These data come from the Motion Pictures Theatres Survey. Source: The Daily, June 28th 2005.
9. The overall rate of inflation for all commodities from 1998 to 2003 was 12.6%. Source: Consumer Price Index (CPI), CANSIM table 326-0002.

accounted for nearly two-thirds of spending at movie theatres, even though they comprise just half of Canada's population[10].

Of the various types of households, lone parent households spent an average of $127, and their 1998-2003 growth rate of spending to attend movies was the highest of all household types. Couples with children spent the most attending movies (an average of $161 per household). This is not surprising due to their large household size, high income levels, and the frequency with which young people attend movies. Age indeed appears to affect movie attendance. For example, individuals aged 65 and over who live alone spent the least ($18) on attending movies.

Mega-theatres have become more popular in metropolitan areas at the expense of smaller theatres, increasing the number of screens nationwide while cutting down the number of theatres. Movie theatres earned operating profits of $52.7 million in 2003/04, a healthy rebound from a loss of $28.9 million in 2001/02. The industry's profits improved because of the success of larger theatres. In contrast, medium and small theatres incurred losses of varying degrees in 2003.[11]

Spending on live performing arts highest in Ontario

The average Canadian household spent $85 to attend live performing arts events in 2003. Spending varied by region. Ontario households spent the most ($105) while households in the four Maritime provinces spent the least. Although they comprise 7.5% of Canada's population, Maritimers accounted for only 4.4% of all household expenditures on performing arts.

The availability of performing arts performances may impact spending. The number of performing arts companies varied widely across the country. Quebec and Ontario had 242 and 216 companies respectively, compared to 36 in all the Atlantic provinces combined. Among the Western provinces, most companies were located in British Columbia (63) and Manitoba (53).

Large disparities in spending on live performing arts also exist by income group. For example, the highest income quintile made up nearly half of the consumer market even though it comprised only one-fifth of Canada's households. Although spending on live performing arts rose most rapidly from 1998 to 2003 for low income households, these households still spent only $20 attending such events, on average, in 2003. In contrast, highest income households spent an average of $204.

10. While the two quintiles comprise 40% of all households, they encompass a larger portion of Canada's population due to the fact that an above-average number of people live in these households.
11. Source: Results from The Motion Pictures Theatres Survey 2003. In The Daily, June 28th 2005, CANSIM table 501-0010 and catalogue 87F0009XIE. In 2003, the average large theatre earned a profit of $217,804. Meanwhile, medium-sized theatres incurred an average loss of $19,545 and small theatres lost an average of $2,844 apiece. This industry is classified under NAICS category 7111.

Unlike with the other entertainment services covered by this article, couples with children did not lead the way in average household spending on performing arts events. Instead, couples *without* children spent the most ($102 per household) on such outings. Perhaps this occurs because many of the events in this category are held by theatre, opera and dance companies, whose performances may be of relatively less interest to younger audiences. This age factor may also explain why performing arts events received the lion's share of the entertainment services spending budget of households headed by people aged 65 and over.

The average household spent 29% more on performing arts in 2003 than it did in 1998. This helped to boost the performing arts industry's operating profit margin from 3.5% to 7.1% from 2000 to 2003.[12]

Quebecers spend the least on live sporting events

On average, households spent $46 on live spectator sports in 2003, up 44% from 1998. Most of this growth occurred due to higher prices rather than increased attendance, as evidenced by an increase of about 40% in the consumer price index for live spectator sports during the same period.

Alberta households spent the most ($75 per household) to attend live sports events while those in Quebec spent the least ($25). From 1998 to 2003, total household expenditure on live sports events rose in every province except Manitoba and New Brunswick.

For income groups, the biggest increase in spectator sports spending came from the lowest income quintile. Nevertheless, as with performing arts, by far the biggest consumers of live sports events are the highest income households. In 2003, they spent nearly nine times as much on spectator sports as households in the lowest income quintile. Indeed the highest income quintile accounted for nearly half of all household spending on spectator sports.

Among the different household types, couples with children led the way, spending an average of $66 attending live sports events in 2003. This was 54% higher than the average spent by such households in 1998. In contrast, one-person households aged 65 and over spent an average of just $6 on live sports in 2003.

The providers of spectator sports services[13] earned operating revenues of $2.2 billion in 2003, a 29% increase from 1998. The industry tends to lose money every year. In 2003,

12. Financial figures for the industry pertain both to for-profit and non-profit organizations. Please note that comparable operating profit figures prior to 2000 are unavailable for the performing arts industry. Source: CANSIM table 361-0002.
13. This industry is classified under NAICS code 7112.

for example, it had an operating profit margin of -3.4%, although this is an improvement from the -8.2% result recorded for 2001.[14]

Household spending at heritage institutions is low and growing slowly

The average Canadian household spent just $36 in 2003 visiting heritage institutions, considerably less than what they spent attending movies, performing arts or sporting events. Heritage institutions include museums, non-commercial art galleries, historic sites, zoos and botanical gardens.

Unlike other entertainment services expenditures which grew rapidly from 1998 to 2003, the average household's spending at heritage institutions rose by only 13%. Households in Newfoundland, Manitoba and Saskatchewan even reported decreases.

On average, households in Nova Scotia and British Columbia increased their spending at heritage institutions by 15% and 14%, respectively, the fastest rates in the country. Nevertheless, Ontario households account for almost half of all household spending on heritage institutions despite the fact that fewer than one quarter of Canada's heritage institutions are located in Ontario.[15] This anomaly may arise because some of Canada's largest heritage institutions are in Ontario. As well, some such spending by Ontarians is done outside of Ontario.[16]

Although the average household's spending at heritage institutions rose by only 13% from 1998 to 2003, some specific types of households reported sharp increases. For example, on average, lone parent households boosted their spending at heritage institutions by 39%, while couples without children had a 29% increase.

Nevertheless, as with most other entertainment services outside the home, couples with children spent the most visiting heritage institutions (an average of $56 per household in 2003), while people aged 65 and over who lived alone, spent the least ($6).

Income levels heavily influence how much households spend at heritage institutions. Not only are Albertans ($47 per household) and Ontarians ($45) the biggest spenders on heritage institutions, the two highest income quintiles account for 70% of all such expenditures even though they comprise only half of Canada's population. Conversely, while the lowest income quintile makes up 12% of the population, it only accounts for 4% of household heritage expenditures.

14. Source: CANSIM table 361-0002
15. Of Canada's 2517 heritage institutions (excluding nature parks), 573 were located in Ontario in 2002. Source: CANSIM table 504-0001
16. The Survey of Household Spending asks respondents to report all of their expenditures, including those made while traveling outside their province of residence.

From 1997 to 2002, heritage institutions[17] boosted their overall operating revenue by 28% to $1.3 billion, but only had an operating profit margin of 2.5%. Provincially, heritage institutions in the Atlantic provinces operated at a slight loss, except for Nova Scotia. Nova Scotians are more likely than other Maritimers to pay to visit a heritage institution[18]. Heritage institution profit margins were highest in Quebec (5.3%), followed by Nova Scotia (5.2%).

Conclusion

The average household's spending on entertainment services outside the home rose by nearly one-third in nominal terms from 1998 to 2003, a period in which the all-items consumer price index rose by only 13%. Spending on such services is far more discretionary than it is necessary, therefore much of the 1998-2003 growth arose from a real increase in the average household's income level during that period, as well as an increase in the availability of these entertainment services.

The notion that entertainment services spending is discretionary is further supported by household spending breakdowns for the provinces and for different income quintiles. Spending is lowest in the Maritime provinces, where incomes are the lowest. The converse is also true, with households in high income provinces like Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia leading the way in entertainment services spending. Moreover, on average, households in the highest income quintile spent $602 in 2003 on entertainment services, while households in the lowest quintile spent an average of $70.

This relationship between income and spending exists to varying degrees for each of the four types of entertainment services outside the home that are covered by this article, suggesting that spending for *each* of these services is highly discretionary. Nevertheless, the performances of suppliers of the four types of services varied widely.

Movie theatres profited from increased demand. Despite a sharp increase in ticket prices, attendance and household spending at movie theatres continued to grow. Similarly, higher household spending helped the performing arts industry to double its operating profit margin from 2000 to 2003.

Conversely, although the average household increased its spending on live spectator sports by 48% from 1998 to 2003, the suppliers of these services continued to lose money.

Profit margins remained low for heritage institutions. Of the four entertainment services covered in this article, households spent the least on visiting heritage institutions, and this spending only rose marginally from 1998 to 2003.

17. This industry is classified under NAICS code 7121. Included here are for-profit and non-profit heritage institutions. Note that 1997 and 2002 figures are cited because no survey was done for 1998 and 2003.
18. 37.6% of Nova Scotians spent to visit a heritage institution in 2003, easily exceeding the proportions recorded in New Brunswick (28.5%), Newfoundland (24.7%) and Prince Edward Island (28.0%).

Among the various types of households, couples with children spend the most on entertainment services by virtue of their relatively high household incomes and the fact that their households contain a higher than average number of people. In contrast, people aged 65 and over who lived alone spend the least. This may be due to their relatively low incomes, the fact only one person accounts for all spending, and seniors discounts. As well, health limitations may, in some cases, restrict opportunities for these people to gain access to entertainment services outside the home.

Appendix A: Average spending per household on entertainment services outside the home

	Average spending per household 1998	2003	Growth rate
Total - all households	$208	$273	31.3%
Provinces			
Newfoundland	$117	$164	40.2%
Prince Edward Island	$147	$214	45.6%
Nova Scotia	$156	$208	33.3%
New Brunswick	$130	$170	30.8%
Québec	$167	$218	30.5%
Ontario	$237	$326	37.6%
Manitoba	$201	$237	17.9%
Saskatchewan	$169	$211	24.9%
Alberta	$272	$323	18.8%
British Columbia	$217	$271	24.9%
Income quintiles			
Lowest quintile	$49	$70	42.9%
Second quintile	$108	$126	16.7%
Third quintile	$178	$230	29.2%
Fourth quintile	$258	$336	30.2%
Highest quintile	$446	$602	35.0%
Household types			
1 person under 65	$161	$180	11.8%
1 person over 65	$60	$67	11.7%
Couples with children	$282	$384	36.2%
Couples without children	$178	$245	37.6%
Couples with additional person	$249	$346	39.0%
Lone parent	$167	$257	53.9%
Other households	$248	$318	28.2%

Appendix B: Average spending per household on movie theatres

	Average spending per household		Growth
	1998	2003	rate
Total - all households	$78	$106	35.9%
Provinces			
Newfoundland	$45	$65	44.4%
Prince Edward Island	$71	$99	39.4%
Nova Scotia	$61	$97	59.0%
New Brunswick	$51	$72	41.2%
Québec	$75	$92	22.7%
Ontario	$84	$122	45.2%
Manitoba	$59	$93	57.6%
Saskatchewan	$49	$62	26.5%
Alberta	$91	$117	28.6%
British Columbia	$84	$108	28.6%
Income quintiles			
Lowest quintile	$24	$31	29.2%
Second quintile	$48	$56	16.7%
Third quintile	$71	$94	32.4%
Fourth quintile	$95	$136	43.2%
Highest quintile	$152	$215	41.4%
Household types			
1 person under 65	$55	$74	34.5%
1 person over 65	$14	$18	28.6%
Couples with children	$112	$161	43.8%
Couples without children	$49	$69	40.8%
Couples with additional person	$121	$159	31.4%
Lone parent	$75	$127	69.3%
Other households	$113	$137	21.2%

Appendix C: Average spending per household on live performing arts

	Average spending per household		Growth
	1998	2003	rate
Total - all households	$66	$85	28.8%
Provinces			
Newfoundland	$33	$48	45.5%
Prince Edward Island	$36	$54	50.0%
Nova Scotia	$43	$49	14.0%
New Brunswick	$31	$49	58.1%
Québec	$55	$75	36.4%
Ontario	$76	$105	38.2%
Manitoba	$64	$76	18.8%
Saskatchewan	$49	$57	16.3%
Alberta	$83	$84	1.2%
British Columbia	$71	$81	14.1%
Income quintiles			
Lowest quintile	$12	$20	66.7%
Second quintile	$30	$38	26.7%
Third quintile	$59	$69	16.9%
Fourth quintile	$79	$94	19.0%
Highest quintile	$149	$204	36.9%
Household types			
1 person under 65	$61	$60	-1.6%
1 person over 65	$36	$37	2.8%
Couples with children	$75	$101	34.7%
Couples without children	$78	$102	30.8%
Couples with additional person	$50	$92	84.0%
Lone parent	$25	$53	112.0%
Other households	$68	$86	26.5%

Appendix D: Average spending per household on live sporting events

	Average spending per household		Growth
	1998	2003	rate
Total - all households	$32	$46	43.8%
Provinces			
Newfoundland	$21	$34	61.9%
Prince Edward Island	$19	$38	100.0%
Nova Scotia	$26	$32	23.1%
New Brunswick	$28	$27	-3.6%
Québec	$14	$25	78.6%
Ontario	$37	$54	45.9%
Manitoba	$45	$38	-15.6%
Saskatchewan	$38	$61	60.5%
Alberta	$54	$75	38.9%
British Columbia	$33	$49	48.5%
Income quintiles			
Lowest quintile	$6	$12	100.0%
Second quintile	$14	$16	14.3%
Third quintile	$21	$36	71.4%
Fourth quintile	$41	$29	-29.3%
Highest quintile	$76	$105	38.2%
Household types			
1 person under 65	$25	$27	8.0%
1 person over 65	$3	$6	100.0%
Couples with children	$42	$66	57.1%
Couples without children	$27	$43	59.3%
Couples with additional person	$35	$44	25.7%
Lone parent	$34	$45	32.4%
Other households	$38	$58	52.6%

Appendix E: Average spending per household on heritage institutions

	Average spending per household		Growth
	1998	2003	rate
Total - all households	$32	$36	12.5%
Provinces			
Newfoundland	$18	$17	-5.6%
Prince Edward Island	$21	$23	9.5%
Nova Scotia	$26	$30	15.4%
New Brunswick	$20	$22	10.0%
Québec	$23	$26	13.0%
Ontario	$40	$45	12.5%
Manitoba	$33	$30	-9.1%
Saskatchewan	$33	$31	-6.1%
Alberta	$44	$47	6.8%
British Columbia	$29	$33	13.8%
Income quintiles			
Lowest quintile	$7	$7	0.0%
Second quintile	$16	$16	0.0%
Third quintile	$27	$31	14.8%
Fourth quintile	$43	$47	9.3%
Highest quintile	$69	$78	13.0%
Household types			
1 person under 65	$19	$18	-5.3%
1 person over 65	$7	$6	-14.3%
Couples with children	$52	$56	7.7%
Couples without children	$24	$31	29.2%
Couples with additional person	$42	$51	21.4%
Lone parent	$23	$32	39.1%
Other households	$29	$37	27.6%

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